



Homer First School and Nursery

Young Carers Policy

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Young Carers Champion: Jess McBride

Homer First School and Nursery is committed to supporting young carers to access education. This policy aims to ensure young carers at Homer First School and Nursery are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled.

Definition

A young carer is a child or young person (under 18 years old) who is helping to look after someone. This may be at home, but could also be a person who lives away from the family home. Most are caring for a parent, but some may be taking responsibility for a sibling, grandparent or other relative. It may also be the case that the young carer is looking after a family friend. In some instances, a young carer may care for more than one person.

The person(s) they look after will have one or more of:

- Physical disability (including sensory disability)
- Learning disability
- Mental health problem
- Chronic illness
- Substance misuse problem

A young carer will take on additional responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development. A young carer might be providing the main care or share responsibilities with another family member.

Caring tasks of the young carer

The caring tasks that a young carer has to deal with can range from:

- Nursing care - giving medication, injections, changing dressings, assisting with mobility etc.
- Personal intimate care - washing, dressing, feeding and helping with toilet requirements.
- Emotional care - being compliant, monitoring the emotional state of the person cared for, listening, being a shoulder to cry on, supporting a parent through depression and trying to cheer them up.

- Domestic care - doing a substantial amount of housework, cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry etc.
- Financial care - running the household, bill paying, benefit collection etc.
- Childcare - taking responsibility for younger siblings in addition to their other caring responsibilities.

At Homer First School and Nursery, we believe that all children and young people have the right to an education, regardless of what is happening at home.

When a young person looks after someone in their family who has a serious illness, disability or substance misuse problem, he or she may need a little extra support to help him or her get the most out of school. Our Young Carers Policy says how we will help any pupil who helps to look after someone at home.

Our school:

- Has a member of staff with special responsibility for young carers and lets all new pupils know who they are and what they can do to help. Ellie Noon is the Young Carers Lead and Jess McBride is the schools Young Carers Champion.
- Treats young carers in a sensitive and child-centred way, upholding confidentiality. The young person's caring role is acknowledged and respected.
- Respects your right to privacy and will only share information about you and your family with people who need to know in order to help you.
- Will not make assumptions about family members with disabilities, mental and physical health conditions or substance misuse issues, or label young people and their families.
- Provide training and information to staff members on how to identify young carers.
- Can put young carers in touch with the local Young Carers Service. We can also put families in touch with other support services if required.
- Welcomes visits from the Young Carers Project to work with pupils referred for support so they can meet in a safe setting for 1:1 support sessions.
- Will provide a safe and confidential space for peer support groups, over seen by a member of staff, allowing young carers in the school to provide emotional support to each other regarding their caring role.
- Will proactively identify young carers and raise awareness of the issues they face as well as the support that is available (for example during assemblies, PSHE sessions).
- Is accessible to parents who have mobility and communication difficulties and involves them in parents' evenings.
- Will consider alternatives if a young carer is unable to attend out of school activities e.g. sports coaching, concerts, due to their caring role.
- Allows young carers to telephone home during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Complies with the Disability Discrimination Act by offering disabled parents support to get their children into school.

Further information and support can be obtained by contacting Ellie Noon via the school office.